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and as Ulysses says it appeared to him :

... N'apparve una montagna bruna  
Per la distanza, e parvemi alta tanto  
Quanto veduta non avea alcuna.

The *Tavole topografiche* are as simple as the complexity of the subject allows and they afford a real help to the comprehension of the poem. The *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso* are mapped out with the geometrical accuracy that the marvelous precision of Dante's description permits, details are fully indicated, and the course of the poet's journey is clearly marked. It is only in the descent from the Eighth Circle to the Ninth that the topographer finds an insuperable difficulty in attempting to reduce the particulars of the narrative to a graphic representation.

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### FRENCH LANGUAGE.

*An Elementary French Reader*, by GASTON DOUAY. New York: Silver, Burdett & Company, 1901. Pp. 297.

THIS new candidate for public favor commends itself at first sight because the book is attractively printed and the page has a pleasing appearance. A closer inspection, however, shows that the book is not well adapted to the use of elementary classes, and it is only for such that a "Reader" has a *raison d'être*. In fact, easy and interesting texts are now furnished in so great a variety that the "Reader" is likely to diminish in popularity. Then, too, this is largely a book of extracts, in spite of the fact that the editor in his preface speaks disparagingly of books so made up.

Considered as an elementary reader, almost all the selections in the book are too difficult. Before the pupil has read a hundred pages, he will have encountered selections from Molière's *L'Avare*, la Bruyère's *Caractères*, Pascal's *Pensées*, Bossuet's *Oraisons Funèbres*, and others of almost equal difficulty and abstruseness.

Another defect in the book is that the notes are excessively numerous. Where there is a vocabulary, there is no need of definitions in

the notes, the proper object of these being to explain matters that can not be properly explained in the vocabulary. Referring, for example, to page 216, it may be said that notes 7, 14, 15, 19, 20, 24, 31, 34, and 36 would better have been omitted and the appropriate definitions given in the vocabulary. Besides, when notes have as many as three figures to distinguish them, they become disagreeably prominent and disfigure the page. A reference to page 53 will show this. On the other hand, such expressions as "états généraux" (p. 9), "corvée" (p. 17), "jeu de paume" (p. 19), "la Terreur" (p. 22), are not explained either in the notes or the vocabulary. True, the text does give a hint of what these words mean, but that is no sufficient reason for not explaining them fully.

Again, some of the notes are too brief to be helpful. To mention only a few instances: p. 17, note 51; p. 21, note 63; p. 22, note 69; p. 25, note 76; p. 28, notes 83 and 85, which should have given a literal translation of the passage in question as well as an explanation. If a pupil gets the literal meaning of each word, he can usually see the meaning of the figurative expression; whereas, if the meaning is merely glossed over for him, he will certainly not recognize it when he meets it in another connection. Thus, if a pupil knew the meaning of each word in the sentence "il met sur pied une armée," he would be very likely to hit on the proper expression in English without any assistance.

Some notes, likewise, have been observed that are either misleading or absolutely incorrect. Thus p. 24, note 74, creates the impression that "un coup d'état" is an act of the government—which is, of course, not correct. P. 35, note 4 would better read "friction matches," since phosphorus is not necessarily present in the "allumette chimique." Concerning p. 58, note 9, it may be said that to translate "épée de chevel" by "vade mecum" would probably not help the student much. This is a case where it would be necessary to define the definition, which ought never to be expected. P. 61, note 26 is not clear and "acommoder de toutes pièces" p. 63, note 53, should not be translated "tear in pieces" because the pupil might take the words liter-

ally: "ciron" p. 84, note 5, should have been given in the vocabulary as "mite" and the note omitted. It may also be said, referring to this note, that the fact that Pascal was so "unscientific" would have been a good reason for omitting this selection. "Combat singulier" p. 108, n. 15, means "duel." A "single fight" means either "one fight" or a fight in which only one person takes a part, which is nonsense. In p. 115, note 13, it would have been more useful to tell us the *value* of the coin than to tell us its *size*. P. 128, note 9 does not mean "could not answer," but "took care not to answer." P. 130, note 32 gives us a curious translation, and one which, moreover, is not correct. The meaning is "don't meddle with things that don't concern you," but here, too, a literal translation would have been useful. "Porte bâtarde," p. 139, note 47, can not possibly mean "house door," since we are told just below that on passing this "porte" one found oneself in "un vaste jardin." The particular "porte" in question was evidently neither an ordinary small gate, nor a carriage gate, as might have been expected in a wall of this kind. P. 169, note 64 might have been more literally translated and then, too, spurs do not usually have "hilts." "Pêcher en eau trouble" p. 170, note 81, means according to Littré "faire des affaires peu honorables." "Brigadiers" p. 178, note 136, does not mean "corporals of cavalry," but "commanders of squads of gendarmes." "Correspondant" p. 180, note 154, is also incorrect, as the context will show. It might be translated "substitute." What the father evidently wanted was that Christodule should act *in loco parentis*, and look after the interests of his daughter.

The reason for dividing the book into four parts is not apparent, since there is no difference between parts ii and iii, either in the character, or the difficulty of the selections. Indeed, numbers iv and ix of part ii are, perhaps, the most difficult in the book.

Since the editor has given us one hundred and eighty-three pages of prose, and only five short poems, the inference is that he regards French poetry as of little consequence in elementary instruction, which many teachers would not admit.

Misprints are few, only the following having been noticed: p. 17, l. 18, for *époque* read *époque*; p. 21, l. 2, for *réservés* read *réservés*; p. 96, l. 24, for *e les* read *elles*; p. 141, l. 17, note 1 should be 61; p. 148, l. 3, there should be no period after "Mme."

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### FRENCH GRAMMAR.

*A French Grammar for Schools and Colleges, together with a Brief Reader and English Exercises*, by H. W. FRASER and J. SQUAIR. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1901. 12mo, iv + 551 pp.

THE authors of this grammar have brought to their work the critical judgment that comes from experience in the class-room, to which is added accurate observation of the needs of the student, and the conception of a correct and economical employment of time and effort on the part of both teacher and student. The list of French grammars is already long, and many of them are excellent, but the grammar under consideration contains many points of superiority which should recommend it to teachers of French in colleges and high schools.

The arrangement is as follows: Pp. 1-12 contain a treatment of French sounds. A feature which is welcome is the use of phonetic characters. The authors have wisely adopted an easy system of symbols already largely used, that of the "Association Phonétique Internationale," instead of giving us another independent system to add to the large stock already on hand. The use of the phonetic symbols is extended to the vocabularies which illustrate the lessons, and to the general vocabulary at the end of the volume. This will make the student more confident in his oral recitation, and will materially aid the work of the teacher, besides saving time eventually. The student is cautioned against the misconception that French and English sounds of similar nature are identical. This is only a hint, of course, but a necessary one too often omitted.

Part i, pp. 13-128, contains the essentials of French grammar presented in progressive and